

Lyrick Enters Midline World With Newly Inherited 'Kipper'

'KIPPER' KICKOFF: The home video debut of Nickelodeon's *Kipper* series will mark Lyrick Studio's first foray into budget-priced product.

On June 6, Lyrick will release the 90-minute *Kipper: Pups, Parks and Picnics and Kipper, Tiger Tales*, priced at \$9.98 apiece. Each video—about the adventures of a curious bound and his animal friends—will contain seven episodes from the series, which is based on popular books by British author/illustrator Mick Inkpen. The books have sold 6 million copies worldwide, according to Lyrick.

Although Lyrick normally prices new releases at \$12.98 or more, Lyrick VP of sales Debbie Ries says the lower price point will ensure that *Kipper* is placed at supermarket checkout lanes and other retail spots that inspire impulse buying.

In addition, several *Kipper* videos that had been previously released by Hallmark Home Entertainment carried a \$10.99 price point, and several large accounts had already placed new titles into their marketing plans at that price. Lyrick inherited the line when it was acquired by *Kipper* producer HIT Entertainment. "One of the two titles we're releasing is in the mass merchants' plan-o-grame," Ries says. "We didn't want to be sold by store with different price points."

Catalog titles will be updated with new packaging and added programming per video, Ries says.

The new *Kipper* titles will be cross-trailer on Lyrick's *A to Z*

With Barney, which debuts May 8. Priced at \$15.98, the double-feature package of *A to Z With Barney* comes with \$3 worth of Luv Disney coupons and two eight-minute *Kipper* episodes as a bonus. Trailers for the new *Kipper* titles are also planned for *Bob the Builder*, *The Wiggles Dance Party*, and *Barney's Musical Castle*. *Kipper* will also be supported by print ads in *Nick Jr.* magazine and on the *Nick Jr.* Web site.

According to Ries, licensed product and other *Kipper* merchandise will be launched during second-quarter 2002 to coincide with the next wave of new video product. "We merged with HIT Entertainment in March, and they also have *Bob the Builder* and *Angelina Ballerina*, so we obviously didn't have time for a huge launch," Ries says. "We'll do that in 2002, when there's new *Kipper* shows, apparel, plush, etc."

Lyrick is preparing the release of the *Angelina Ballerina* video series for retail by teaming one title, *The Snow Fairy Princess*, as an exclusive offer in the American Greetings doll catalog, Ries says. "When more episodes are produced, then we'll go to retail."

PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE: The acclaimed animated children's TV programs *Little Bill*, based on Bill Cosby's picture books, and *Dora the Explorer* will make their video debut June 6 from Paramount Home Entertainment. Both shows air during Nickelodeon's *Nick Jr.* preschool programming block.

Each video is priced at \$12.98



by Moira McCormick

and has a running time of 50 minutes. Initial titles are *Big Little Bill*, *Me and My Family*, and, in the *Dora* series, *Wish Upon a Star* and *Swing Into Action*. Each video also contains a free activity book. For the *Dora* titles, one activity is a free E-card that can be accessed through the *Nick Jr.* Web site.

Paramount is supporting the titles with network and cable TV advertising as Nickelodeon and *Nick Jr.* and other networks, as well as in print publications, including *People*, *Woman's Day*, *InStyle*, *TV Guide*, and *Family Circle*.

Also upping from Paramount and *Nick Jr.* is the first full-length direct-to-video title from the *Little Bear* franchise, Maurice Sendak's *the Little Bear Movie*. The 76-minute movie is priced at \$19.98 and is set for an Aug. 7 release. A new *Blue's Clues* title, *Blue's Clues: Playtime With Periwinkle*, is due in stores May 1, priced at \$19.98.

"*Blue's Clues* and *Rugrats* are mature franchises, [and] while *Little Bear* has been out there, it's still growing," Paramount spokesman Martin Slythe says. "Not with *Little Bill* and *Dora the Explorer*, here are two new franchises that

will keep the *Nick Jr.* brand fresh."

Paramount will also try to tap the wide audience for *Little Bill* and *Dora*, which feature African-American and Latino leads, respectively.

"Both series have demonstrated their universal appeal," Slythe says. "They'll probably grow in popularity as video franchises in much the same way that *Blue's Clues* and *Little Bear* have grown."

SEEING SPOTS: Walt Disney Home Video has launched an

instant-win game connected to its just-released *101 Dalmatians*.

The grand prize fortifies an opportunity to be drawn as a character in the upcoming direct-to-video *101 Dalmatians: The Animated Sequel* and a trip to southern California. One specially marked *101 Dalmatians* videocassette and one DVD will determine the winners. Contestants can also enter by mailing their name and address to Disney.

101 Dalmatians is on sale for \$24.98 on VHS and \$29.98 on DVD.

Billboard

APRIL 26, 2002

Top Kid Video

COMPILED FROM A RANDOM SAMPLE OF RETAIL STORE SALES REPORTS

WEEK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260	261	262	263	264	265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280	281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288	289	290	291	292	293	294	295	296	297	298	299	300	301	302	303	304	305	306	307	308	309	310	311	312	313	314	315	316	317	318	319	320	321	322	323	324	325	326	327	328	329	330	331	332	333	334	335	336	337	338	339	340	341	342	343	344	345	346	347	348	349	350	351	352	353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360	361	362	363	364	365	366	367	368	369	370	371	372	373	374	375	376	377	378	379	380	381	382	383	384	385	386	387	388	389	390	391	392	393	394	395	396	397	398	399	400	401	402	403	404	405	406	407	408	409	410	411	412	413	414	415	416	417	418	419	420	421	422	423	424	425	426	427	428	429	430	431	432	433	434	435	436	437	438	439	440	441	442	443	444	445	446	447	448	449	450	451	452	453	454	455	456	457	458	459	460	461	462	463	464	465	466	467	468	469	470	471	472	473	474	475	476	477	478	479	480	481	482	483	484	485	486	487	488	489	490	491	492	493	494	495	496	497	498	499	500	501	502	503	504	505	506	507	508	509	510	511	512	513	514	515	516	517	518	519	520	521	522	523	524	525	526	527	528	529	530	531	532	533	534	535	536	537	538	539	540	541	542	543	544	545	546	547	548	549	550	551	552	553	554	555	556	557	558	559	560	561	562	563	564	565	566	567	568	569	570	571	572	573	574	575	576	577	578	579	580	581	582	583	584	585	586	587	588	589	590	591	592	593	594	595	596	597	598	599	600	601	602	603	604	605	606	607	608	609	610	611	612	613	614	615	616	617	618	619	620	621	622	623	624	625	626	627	628	629	630	631	632	633	634	635	636	637	638	639	640	641	642	643	644	645	646	647	648	649	650	651	652	653	654	655	656	657	658	659	660	661	662	663	664	665	666	667	668	669	670	671	672	673	674	675	676	677	678	679	680	681	682	683	684	685	686	687	688	689	690	691	692	693	694	695	696	697	698	699	700	701	702	703	704	705	706	707	708	709	710	711	712	713	714	715	716	717	718	719	720	721	722	723	724	725	726	727	728	729	730	731	732	733	734	735	736	737	738	739	740	741	742	743	744	745	746	747	748	749	750	751	752	753	754	755	756	757	758	759	760	761	762	763	764	765	766	767	768	769	770	771	772	773	774	775	776	777	778	779	780	781	782	783	784	785	786	787	788	789	790	791	792	793	794	795	796	797	798	799	800	801	802	803	804	805	806	807	808	809	810	811	812	813	814	815	816	817	818	819	820	821	822	823	824	825	826	827	828	829	830	831	832	833	834	835	836	837	838	839	840	841	842	843	844	845	846	847	848	849	850	851	852	853	854	855	856	857	858	859	860	861	862	863	864	865	866	867	868	869	870	871	872	873	874	875	876	877	878	879	880	881	882	883	884	885	886	887	888	889	890	891	892	893	894	895	896	897	898	899	900	901	902	903	904	905	906	907	908	909	910	911	912	913	914	915	916	917	918	919	920	921	922	923	924	925	926	927	928	929	930	931	932	933	934	935	936	937	938	939	940	941	942	943	944	945	946	947	948	949	950	951	952	953	954	955	956	957	958	959	960	961	962	963	964	965	966	967	968	969	970	971	972	973	974	975	976	977	978	979	980	981	982	983	984	985	986	987	988	989	990	991	992	993	994	995	996	997	998	999</th